



State of Arizona

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Governor Jan Brewer Celebrates 61st Annual National Day of Prayer

PHOENIX – In conjunction with the 61st Annual National Day of Prayer, Governor Jan Brewer today declared May 3, 2012, an "Arizona Day of Prayer" through an official proclamation.

Also today, the Governor will file with the Arizona Superior Court a motion to dismiss a lawsuit brought against her for similar proclamations the Governor has issued in past years commemorating a Day of Prayer.

"Arizonans have been voluntarily coming together in prayer for generations," said Governor Brewer. "I am honored to once again recognize a fundamental freedom and join the millions of Americans of all faiths and backgrounds to pray for wisdom, courage and guidance and give thanks for the countless blessings bestowed upon us."

Uniting in prayer is a custom as old as our Nation. The first national call to prayer was issued in 1775 when the Continental Congress asked the colonies to pray for wisdom in forming a nation. In 1952, President Harry S. Truman signed legislation proclaiming that a National Day of Prayer must be declared by each subsequent president on an appropriate date of his choice. Today, our country celebrates this historic day on the first Thursday of each May.

In recent years, out-of-state groups have tried unsuccessfully to challenge the constitutionality of recognized days of prayer. Specifically, the Freedom from Religion Foundation – a Wisconsin-based group – has attempted to block the State of Arizona from commemorating an Arizona Day of Prayer. A U.S. District Court has already dismissed one lawsuit from the group, and Governor Brewer is optimistic the Arizona Superior Court will now take similar action.

"I'll keep fighting for our ability to commemorate a voluntary Day of Prayer, because I know how important it is to the many Arizonans who rely on the power of prayer during times of both triumph and tragedy," said Governor Brewer. "Our ability to gather, worship and pray is one of the most valuable freedoms granted to us by the Constitution. I encourage everyone – regardless of race, creed or political persuasion – to exercise that freedom today as we pray for the safety of our service members, our State and our Nation."

This year, our country celebrates the theme, "One Nation Under God," based on Psalm 33:12: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord."

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